Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management

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EDITORIAL

Learning is a continuous process. It begins when you are newly out of the womb, and hopefully continues through to old age. It is an essential stage in the process of becoming effective at whatever we choose to do. I have found that one of the most important things to ensure beneficial learning is relevance. I discovered this when my son was just two years old and I was trying to teach him his colours. He could name each of the colours as they were on the cut-out balloon shapes I had taped to the wall, but he was not interested in transferring this knowledge to other things around him. One day we were out walking and I pointed out a green "truck", a red "convertible" and a blue "station wagon". I had inadvertently found the key that motivated his learning – colours were relevant to him in the context of vehicles. He quickly learned his colours and was also able to generalize his new-found information to other situations.

This concept of relevance is also critical to learning for adults. In this issue of the Journal, we focus on training and education. And we have attempted to keep it relevant. Training and education in our field is often thought to be provided to the volunteer by the manager of volunteers, but we have recognized that everyone involved must keep the learning cycle active to ensure we have effective programs delivered for and by volunteers.

We begin with a thorough examination by Marisa Gelfusa of the difference between formal and informal training. She then suggests ways of offering opportunities to volunteers so they can continue to learn through informal training. Next, Greg Procknow identifies three stages of volunteer learning and provides a helpful understanding of the learning process.

Once we have grasped the theoretical underpinnings of learning, it is useful to have concrete tips for implementing our ideas. Mike Aoki contributes general, practical tips for training volunteers. Beth Cougler Blom passes on some specific tips for managers of volunteers who are planning training sessions for their volunteers. And Kathy Magee delivers suggestions for implementing online orientation and training.

As we said, though, learning is also important for managers of volunteers. Pam Vincer presents us with a reflective piece on "Salute to the Profession", an event held in October 2010, and identifies several training opportunities for managers of volunteers. This is followed by an article by Emanuela Gennaccaro Ducharme in which she addresses professional certification and its benefits. We finish by introducing you to a new resource which is meant to educate executives about the value of volunteer engagement.

It is our hope that this issue of the Journal will be a valuable tool in your quest to keep your own and others' learning cycles continuous – and relevant.

Ruth Vant, Editorial Team

HOW TO KEEP VOLUNTEERS LEARNING WHEN THE TRAINING IS OVER
by Maria Gelfusa

According to some studies, 60 to 90 percent of learning that takes place during training is *not* applied to the task.[1] How can we keep our volunteers learning and applying what they have learned, after the training is over?

Organizing training activities requires time, energy and money. These resources are often at a premium in our agencies making it essential to create learning opportunities for volunteers that are relevant, engaging and applicable in the context of their volunteer role.

Managers know the importance of training and its role in preparing new volunteers to accomplish their tasks. We also know that volunteers value training. The 2007 Canadian Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating indicates that the opportunity to develop and utilize skills are important motivations for potential and existing volunteers to become involved and to stay involved.[2] The "Bridging the Gap" study, published by Volunteer Canada in 2010, confirms this.[3]

How can we ensure that our training efforts offer ongoing benefits for the agency and the volunteer? One solution is to supplement formal learning activities with informal learning opportunities throughout the whole volunteer commitment. These informal activities serve to consolidate, update and enrich the learning that has been acquired in the formal setting and keeps it in the forefront of the volunteer's practice.

"Formal" and "Informal" Learning
Several definitions of formal and informal learning exist. For the purposes of this article, the following will be used: "Formal learning is typically sponsored, classroom based and highly structured. Informal training may occur in institutions, is not typically structured and control of learning rests primarily with the learner".[4]

The formal approach to learning includes tools such as courses, workshops, mentorships, webinars and training manuals. Formal learning strategies are important as they provide information about the task, the agency's mission and policies, the catchment population and organizational procedures. A standardized approach with learning objectives set by the agency ensures that the agency and the volunteer are on the same page about what needs to be done, how it needs to be done and why it is important.

Informal learning includes strategies such as trial and error, observation, asking questions, using peer networks to find information and doing research. Informal learning usually starts when volunteers begin to perform their tasks (as they watch more experienced volunteers, try out behaviours, ask questions) and often happens unbeknownst to the learner. It is important to help volunteers recognize and acknowledge informal learning. A discussion about this type of learning also creates opportunities for the volunteer and the manager to validate perceptions and provide additional or corrective information.

As an added advantage, informal learning provides volunteers who have had negative experiences in formal learning situations with flexibility and control. Volunteers who are newcomers to Canada may benefit from informal learning due to its social components and opportunities for connection. Self-directed learning skills are important to take full advantage of informal learning opportunities. Dr. Carter McNamara, in his article "Strong Value of Self-Directed Learning in the Workplace", offers a list of 15 things managers can do to help people become self-directed learners.[5]

There are many ways that managers of volunteer resources can balance formal and informal learning in volunteer programs. The following constitute a few ways that they can facilitate ongoing learning and skill application with their volunteers.

Team-based Learning
Team-based learning involves developing training with the intent that it will continue in the form of group meetings after the workshop or course is over, to increase learning transfer. Dr. Carolin Rekar Munro suggests a three-step approach that is implemented before, during and after formal training takes place.[6] The first involves assisting the participants to formulate goals for their learning *before* the workshop. These must be in line with the

nature of their tasks and the agency's mission. Secondly, during the workshop or course, the participants are divided into groups and spend time together reflecting on and applying the concepts that are presented. The third step is for groups to meet on a monthly basis to discuss goal attainment, share insights on skill application and offer support to their peers.

Team-based learning is a good option, particularly for agencies which are grooming volunteers for leadership roles. Being part of an ongoing network of learning will provide volunteers with the opportunity to practice leadership skills such as goal setting, decision-making and collaboration. The support and connection could also benefit new volunteers who are beginning a long-term commitment and volunteers who work in areas with high burn-out rates, such as those who assist victims of violence. An ongoing network of peers may prove to be effective in reducing this risk.

Many agencies already use a variation of team-based learning when they organize monthly meetings for volunteers to share experiences and receive support. Why not add a regular learning component that is generated by the participants based on knowledge, skill acquisition and application?

A growing trend in volunteer engagement is the emergence of short-term and project-based commitments. This involves volunteers using existing skills to meet agency needs in a timely fashion. These volunteers already have the necessary skills to accomplish the task, but they still require an orientation to the agency, its policies and procedures as well as other information. This group of volunteers may or may not be interested in meetings but engaging them in ongoing learning after the formal training may prove mutually beneficial. By using social media, we not only increase their qualifications, but also increase the likelihood that they remain in active contact with the agency and continue to volunteer.

Social Media
Social media and other tools from the web make it possible to encourage ongoing learning and keep groups of volunteers connected after the formal

training activity by creating a vast network for sharing information. An agency may develop tools such as a blog or an online discussion group for volunteers that contains news, relevant posts and links. These are most effective if they have an interactive component. For example, managers can post a discussion question relevant to a volunteer task or to the clients of the agency and then invite volunteers to post their questions, comments, experiences, articles and websites. Clear posting guidelines and a watchful webmaster will help keep the online tool a relevant and reliable source of learning and support.

Self-learning Sites
Other ways to help volunteers continue learning is to provide them with the opportunity to access material. Along with reading material, another interesting source of informal learning is self-learning websites. These sites such as YouTube University (www.youtube.com/edu) have videos that provide "lessons" on several different topics. A quick search of "volunteer management" yields information on volunteer training, leadership and more. A search of "self-learning sites" provides many options that you may suggest to your volunteers. As with any reference, it is important to have a close look before recommending any site to volunteers.

E-Portfolios
E-Portfolios can be "collections of evidence about learning — these include text, links, images and hyperlinks to associated websites... they can be seen as a type of learning record or evidence of achievement as well as facilitating student's reflections".[7]

These may be useful if you wish to formalize the ongoing learning requirement and add it as a responsibility to the position description. Volunteers can be encouraged to record and share the material they have read, viewed or produced in this portfolio as a demonstration of their ongoing learning activities. They can also be used as e-resumés for volunteers who are seeking employment to demonstrate material they have reviewed.

Opportunities for ongoing learning, combining formal and informal learning strategies, benefit both agencies and volunteers. These ensure that volunteers have up-to-date information on how to accomplish their tasks and offer a rich opportunity for shared learning and social connections. This combination can create an environment where volunteers are more engaged and better informed about their roles as they apply their skills within a creative and supportive network.

Implementing tools to extend the learning experience does not have to be elaborate. A good place to start is to look at something the agency is already offering volunteers such as meetings, newsletters, recognition events. Then, consistently add a learning component such as a speaker, a link or sharing of best practices. This will be an added value to the activity that benefits both the agency and the volunteer.

Marisa Gelfusa has been an active program director, trainer and consultant in the nonprofit sector for over 15 years in Ontario and Quebec. She is currently working with Training Services at Volunteer Toronto. As an active member of the community, she has volunteered in the areas of human rights, palliative care, children and families and community development.

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THREE STAGES OF VOLUNTEER LEARNING
by Greg Procknow

Once a volunteer enters into a nonprofit organization, they need new knowledge to help them assimilate and gain confidence. This knowledge acquisition will take place over a period of time. At first, there may be some apprehension but throughout their orientation, training and continuous development within their volunteer role, they will gain a secure knowledge base. In 1990, John Anderson proposed the Adaptive Character of Thought Theory (ACT theory) which strived to describe the learning process of individuals.[1] This theory can be adapted to volunteer development and learning in the nonprofit environment. Each volunteer will go through three stages of learning within their role: declarative knowledge, knowledge compilation and procedural knowledge.

Declarative Knowledge is simply learning basic knowledge, information and facts about the nonprofit and the role that the volunteer will play within the organization. During this stage of learning, the volunteer is to focus all of their attention and cognitive resources on learning their volunteer role. For instance, Janet is being trained on how to work with clients of the Canadian Cancer Society's "CancerConnection" program. All of her attention needs to be channeled to meet the requirements of learning how to interface with those clients. At this stage, Janet's knowledge in this volunteer role is minimal. Further, she is bound to make some errors. At this stage in her learning, any distractions will in all probability affect her learning and thus her performance in the role.

Knowledge Compilation constitutes merging these volunteer tasks into simple and understandable sequences which work to simplify as well as streamline the volunteer's tasks. Here, Janet will translate what she has learned in the declarative knowledge stage into volunteer action. Janet's performance becomes much more accurate and in tune with what the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) expects. Her interaction with clients will now be one fluid sequence of tasks.

Procedural Knowledge. Upon successful and consistent practice in her role, the volunteer's performance will become habitual and automatic. Without much thought, Janet can now perform 100% in her volunteer role. It is rare that Janet's performance would be impaired if she were to devote some of her cognitive resources to an additional task, such as learning the ropes of political advocacy in CCS. Synonymous with this stage of procedural knowledge is the development of tacit knowledge.

Declarative knowledge = New volunteer recruit receives orientation, orientation manual and a training manual upon request; they learn the basic knowledge, facts and information to participate in the nonprofit organization.

Knowledge compilation = Active Volunteer (less than one year experience); they have now taken what they learned from the declarative knowledge stage and streamlined the task, performing each task in one smooth sequence

Procedural knowledge = Regular volunteer; mastered the task well enough to be considered an on-the-job trainer; they are now a master at performing the task and do so automatically and habitually.
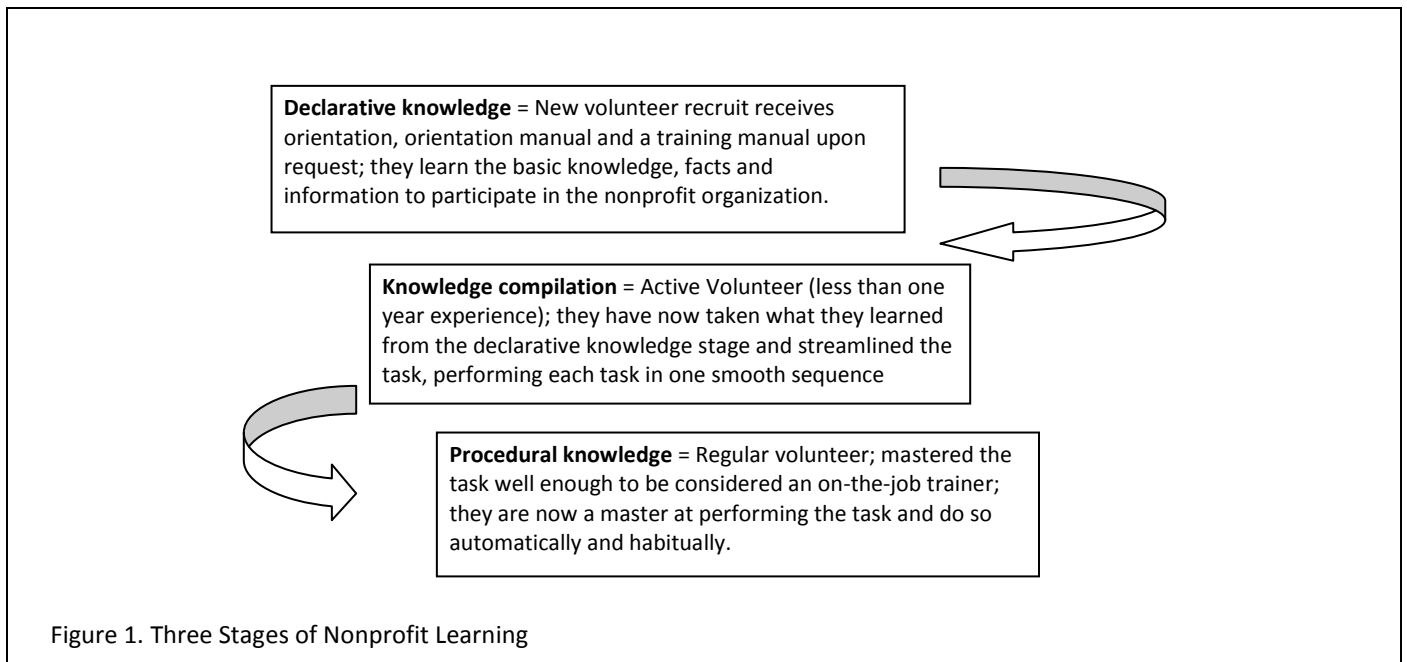
Figure 1. Three Stages of Nonprofit Learning

Tacit Knowledge can be defined as the knowledge demonstrated by Janet in her volunteer role that stems from her increased experience within the position, as well as her own insight throughout the development process. Janet now employs her intuition, self-taught tricks and increased task know-how throughout her volunteer experience, making her volunteer position much simpler to perform and less time consuming. This knowledge is known to be incredibly troublesome to transfer to others. If Janet were to become a leadership CCS volunteer, she would need to remember that new volunteers will require substantial mentoring and coaching throughout the training and transfer process in order to acquire the tacit knowledge she has gained through her own experience.

> *Janet now employs her intuition, self-taught tricks and increased task know-how throughout her volunteer experience, making her volunteer position much simpler to perform and less time consuming.*

Surrey Food Bank Study – Tacit Knowledge
The Surrey Food Bank (SFB) is currently the third largest food bank in British Columbia, serving 15,000 clients monthly. They have hundreds of dedicated volunteers helping out in their food re-distribution warehouse throughout the year. Within a day, they often have at least 30% of their regular volunteers on the job. These volunteers possess strong tacit knowledge. Most of their tasks are completed using their wide experience and insight, their little tricks and know-how's. A large component of their volunteer base consists of high school students as well as community service hours volunteers. Tacit knowledge is almost impossible to transfer to these shorter-term volunteers. Tacit knowledge transfer is something that has to take place over time, requiring the trainee to shadow a more experienced volunteer for a period of time. This usually happens after the food bank volunteer demonstrates that they are there for the long term.

During a study at SFB in early 2010, 15 volunteer team leaders were observed training new volunteers.

Eleven of the team leaders trained by relying on their experience and task know-how and did not refer to the list of important tasks for each operational area, as outlined in the volunteer position description. Careful evaluation of the performance of these trainees demonstrated that those whose trainers relied on attempts to transfer tacit knowledge had significantly underperformed, when left later to fend for themselves, slowing warehouse operations and putting other areas of the warehouse at a standstill.

For obvious reasons, tacit knowledge transfer from those experienced volunteers to volunteers in training should be avoided; only when tacit knowledge compliments the job description provided by the nonprofit will this be useful to both the trainee and the organization's operations. So, for those coordinators of volunteer resources planning upcoming training sessions, think of the individual performance impediments that can arise when the trainee is encouraged to deviate from such auxiliary training aids as job descriptions and be wary of the adverse negative implications on the nonprofit organization's services.

Gregory Procknow is the current CEO of Intrinsic Non-Profit Training. He also acts as a leading training consultant with the organization.

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TEN TIPS FOR TRAINING VOLUNTEERS
by Mike Aoki

Motivation, appreciation and participation are key factors to consider when training volunteers. I have conducted training seminars for a variety of corporate and nonprofit clients over the past decade. During that time, it became obvious that volunteers – far more than employees – require training that incorporates elements of motivation, appreciation and participation.

You can improve your volunteers' effectiveness and increase your volunteer retention rates by designing your training around these ideas. Here are ten tips to help you accomplish this.

How to motivate volunteers during training

1) Use emotional examples: warm their hearts. Show how your cause affects people's lives. Use detailed stories about the people who have been helped by your organization. One of your most important training goals is to motivate your volunteers.

2) Overcome "compassion fatigue": many volunteers are afraid their individual effort will not be enough to make a difference. Bring your cause to a human level by using success stories showing how each volunteer's contribution helps your cause. Maybe a single volunteer cannot cure world hunger by themselves. But, they can make sure at least one child does not go to bed hungry tonight. Let your volunteers know they are making a difference through their efforts.

3) Use facts: now that you have appealed to their hearts, appeal to their heads. Show statistics illustrating how their volunteer work makes a difference within their community. Emotional stories move the heart. Facts move the mind.

Remember, retaining your volunteer base requires constant motivation and that includes motivating them during training.

How to show appreciation during training

Malcolm Knowles[1] was a pioneer in the field of adult learning. He identified several characteristics regarding adult learners that show the importance of appreciation.

4) Adult learners have accumulated a foundation of life experiences and knowledge: they want to share their experiences with others. When you design a volunteer training program, be sure to include opportunities for volunteers to ask questions and share their ideas. Honour their experience and thank them for their contribution.

5) Adult learners are goal-oriented: when they attend volunteer training, they want a program that has clearly defined goals and objectives. Begin your training session by highlighting the key skills volunteers will learn during training. At the end of each session, recap the key objectives you have covered.

6) Adult learners are practical: during a training session, they want to learn real-world techniques, not just theory. So, focus on the practical tasks they need to accomplish in their volunteer roles. If they are going to answer the phones during a fundraising telethon, focus on the actual wording they should use while speaking with a donor.

> *"The more you make your volunteers feel special, the more they will contribute."*

7) Adult learners want respect: they want their comments and contributions recognized and respected. This is the most important way you can show your volunteers how much you appreciate their contribution. Acknowledge the time they have donated. Thank them for attending training and for committing to a certain volunteer role within your organization. The more you make your volunteers feel special, the more they will contribute.

How to encourage participation during training

8) Use a short "hands-on" exercise: if you are training volunteers on how to fill out a donation form, give them the actual form and have them practice filling it out. Or better yet, do a role-play in pairs; with one volunteer taking the call and the other person acting as the potential donor. The more

hands-on experience they receive during training, the easier it is for them to transfer these new skills to their volunteer role.

9) Show a short video and encourage volunteers to make comments: just be sure not to let the video run for more than a few minutes without stopping it to debrief. A debrief session allows volunteers to make comments and to contribute their ideas.

10) Do a demo and then have volunteers practice what they have just seen: people love demonstrations because they see how a service works. For example, you and another staff member could role model how to conduct door-to-door canvassing. Then break the audience into pairs and have them practice using the skills they just saw demonstrated.

Use these ten tips to help design your next volunteer training program. They will help you improve your volunteers' motivation level and increase your volunteer retention rates.

Mike Aoki is the President of Reflective Keynotes Inc., a Toronto based training firm. His customer service, sales and presentation skills workshops help people improve their over-the-phone and face-to-face communication skills. For more free tips, visit: www.reflectivekeynotes.com

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LEARNING RESOURCES

- Charity Village Campus – check out http://www.charityvillage.com/cv/learn/index.asp for a range of online courses geared to nonprofit sector management, including "Building a Great Volunteer Program"

- Humber College has set up a demo site, allowing you to view lessons from their online Volunteer Management Certificate Program. Visit http://ces.humberc.on.ca/demovm

- Carleton University School of Public Policy and Administration will offer its Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Governance & Management Course, June 9-17, 2011 (seven full-day modules). For further information about this course please contact Sandra Jones at the Centre for Voluntary Sector Research and Development, 613-520-7444 or via email cvsrd@carleton.ca.

ASK BEFORE YOU SPEAK: QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR A SUCCESSFUL TRAINING EXPERIENCE

by Beth Cougler Blom

Some of us thrive on speaking in front of groups while others dread it. Yet training is often an essential part of the job for a manager of volunteers. Here are some questions to consider as you plan your next training event, working towards a successful outcome for both you and your participants.

1. *What will my training event look like?*

Develop a lesson plan well in advance. A simple table format with three columns and multiple rows will work well. The first column indicates the start time of each of the teaching elements within your plan and the second and third columns capture the content and handouts, audio visual or other materials you will need.

Consider carefully how long each element in your lesson plan will take. It is often most difficult to get the pace right and have the proper amount of content for the time available.

2. *How will I make my content appeal to everyone in the room?*

There are three types of learners – visual, auditory and kinesthetic – and they learn best by seeing, hearing and doing, respectively. Visual learners relate well to images, videos or demonstrations while auditory learners may like listening to guest speakers or participating in group discussions. Finally, kinesthetic learners appreciate hands-on activities, role-plays and ice-breakers or other activities which get them up and moving around.

In addition, remember that some people process information more quickly than others. Consider distributing pre-reading or handouts to give participants more time to digest the content.

3. *What stories will I tell?*

Think of how you can incorporate stories related to your content into your training session to really deepen participants' learning.

4. *What can I do to enjoy the teaching experience?*

First, visualize in advance that your teaching event will go well. When the day comes, try to relax and be authentic. Participants feel uncomfortable when they can tell that the speaker feels uncomfortable, so just imagine them wishing you well. If the topic warrants, use your natural humour and laughter to engage participants. If you make a mistake, just carry on. Never admit that you are not as good a trainer as you would like to be – chances are the participants will have no inkling of this unless you tell them.

Wear something professional that you feel good in. Try out different styles and you will begin to develop a preference for what "teaching clothes" work for you.

5. *What will I do to ensure participation?*

> *Remember that – especially with adults – you are likely not the only person in the room with experience in the content.*

Build time for participation into your lesson plan. Ask open-ended questions and include activities that encourage people to contribute to the content in various ways. Pay attention to how much you talk. Allow others time to ask questions or interject their own experience. Remember that – especially with adults – you are likely not the only person in the room with experience in the content.

Guest speakers also may help liven up your classroom and allow your participants to tap into someone else's experience with your subject matter.

6. *How will I stick to my plan?*

Sometimes things do not go exactly as planned. Participants may jump ahead or venture outside the scope of your content in their questions or discussion; this is where your experience and good judgment can help. Decide in the moment what questions to address and what to put off. Keep an eye on your lesson plan timings. Incorporate a "parking lot" to capture topics to address later or

talk to participants informally at the end of the session if necessary.

7. *What will my evaluation process look like?*

Evaluate the training event right after the session using personal reflection as well as informal and formal feedback from participants. Consider what you could change for next time, then go back and revise your lesson plan as necessary.

Keep asking these questions of yourself and you are sure to grow your success as a trainer. Whether you deliver short information sessions to your own volunteers or large workshops at professional conferences, it pays to have a plan.

Beth Cougler Blom has been managing Volunteer Victoria's training and outreach programs since 2006.

NEWSBIT

IYV + 10: 2011 marks the tenth anniversary of International Year of the Volunteers.
To tap into the build-up, visit:
http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/iyv-10.html

**International Year of Volunteers
10th anniversary
2011**

CJVRM Submission Deadlines and Themes

Issue	Deadline	Theme
Volume 19.2	Articles due end of May 2011	Recognition
Volume 19.3	Articles due end of August 2011	New Trends

ONLINE TRAINING AND ORIENTATION
by Kathy Magee

Before you begin the process of online training or orientation, you will need to define the group of individuals you wish to train. The questions to ask yourself are, "What level of computer skill will be required to complete the process?", "How long will the process take?" and finally "How will you communicate with the volunteers/staff about the online training/orientation?" Not everyone has a home computer; therefore you will need to take that into consideration before beginning the process. If you choose to use online training/orientation, you will need to direct your volunteers to areas where they can access computers, such as public libraries or perhaps within your own organization.

Online training and orientation can take many shapes. It can be directly communicated within the body of an email. It can come in the form of an email attachment. Or it can be a link to a website.

As you can imagine, all of these formats look very different. The trainee needs to be able to understand how to access the training. The key to success is clear, simple and easy to follow instructions with as few words as possible. Those looking for the training might be at different stages in computer knowledge. Therefore, the directions must be very clear, to the point and contain the necessary information in an easy to read version.

Whether you send it by email, an attachment or a link, the wording is key. Point form is easiest to understand and to follow. For example, someone who is not computer savvy might need instruction on how to open an attachment. However, if you explain how to open the attachment as part of your email, they are now able to begin the process without frustration. Number the steps, as this is an easy way to follow directions. Remember that all correspondence should be addressed to the level of a beginner. The last thing you want to do is frustrate someone to the point where they do not want to become engaged.

If at all possible, include a graphic or photo along with simple instructions. This will provide additional support for those who are unsure of their skills to navigate a computer. Insert screen shots to provide visual confirmation that they are completing the process correctly.

Always include the name and contact information of someone to call for assistance. This allows the opportunity for trainees to ask questions and get immediate answers. You want to avoid any frustration while at the same time supporting the individual right from the beginning.

As with any form of training, you must provide a way to measure success. Two main options are a certificate of completion and a questionnaire.

The first option is a certificate of completion that may be included at the end of the training. The purpose of this certificate is for the organization to track the training and for the volunteer to have a record of the training, for future reference. Once the person has completed their training, they will be instructed to complete the certificate and forward it to their supervisor. Note that with the certificate option, you are depending on the honour system, as some might rush through the training and complete their certificate without having read through the material.

The second option is to inform everyone at the beginning of the training about a questionnaire that will need to be completed on their first day of placement. This short questionnaire should touch on the topics addressed in the training. This option is the most effective to ensure they fully understood the messaging in the training/orientation.

Many organizations choose to do both, for educational purposes and for tracking the organizational training.

The most important message about online training is to connect with your volunteers. Positive, clear messaging and available support will ensure a great working relationship.

I have found online training to be of great benefit. Not only are we able to reach our many volunteers, but we are also able to deliver training without the extra demand for additional hours from either the staff or the volunteers. Online training alleviates the

time constraints for both. It is very flexible as it allows the opportunity to train without travelling to a central training site or having to attend a session at a set time. With the many demands on volunteers such as family, work or leisure, online training provides an alternative for volunteers to complete training or orientation in a shorter amount of time. This adds value to your program by showing consideration for your volunteers and their valuable time.

Kathy Magee is the Coordinator of Volunteer Services for the City of Ottawa. Over the past four years she has chaired the National Canadian Parks & Recreation Conference, the Professional Administrators of Volunteer Resources – Ontario's Ottawa Conference and is currently the Chairperson for the Ottawa Administrators of Volunteer Resources.

LOOKING AHEAD…

"Growing the Future" - 2011 MAVA Conference
May 12 (reception) & 13, 2011
Clarion Hotel, Winnipeg, Manitoba
http://www.mavamanitoba.ca

MAVA
Manitoba Association for Volunteer Administration

Join us for a full day conference as we explore new approaches to managing diversity in the volunteer market, boomer volunteering, the latest trends and research out of Volunteer Canada and much more! MAVA is pleased to welcome Ruth McKenzie, President of Volunteer Canada and Senator Sharon Carstairs. Special guest, The Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross, Minister of Housing and Community Development will join us for lunch to present MAVA's Outstanding Service Award for Leadership of Volunteers.

"YOU: Inspired. Innovative. Incredible." - PAVR-O 2011 Conference
June 1-3, 2011
Mississauga, Ontario
http://www.pavro.on.ca/conference

PAVR-O

PAVR-O's annual conference for managers of volunteer resources is dedicated to excellence in professional development, where delegates have the opportunity for in-depth learning, networking and discussion of current issues. All conference delegates will receive a copy of Leading the Way to Successful Volunteer Involvement: Practical Tools for Busy Executives by Betty B. Stallings with Susan J. Ellis. (See page 15 for a review of this book.)

2011 National Conference - Hosted by AVRBC & CAVR
June 12-14, 2011
Vancouver, British Columbia
http://www.cavrconference.ca

Branching out
CAVR NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2011
NEW DIRECTIONS IN VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Volunteer Management is a growing field and leaders in the non-profit sector are noticing its critical importance to their organization's success. This conference is for board members, executive directors, and coordinators of volunteers wanting to sink their roots into volunteer management and branch out into the private, government and business sectors to gain new insights and approaches in leading volunteer teams.

WHY CERTIFY?

by Emanuela Gennacaro Ducharme

Education and training – where does it start? Where does it end? There is so much to learn, to better understand, to open our minds, in the world of theory or in a more practical sense.

What does education and training look like for someone employed in volunteer resources management? I know from surveys for Professional Administrators of Volunteer Resources – Ontario (PAVR-O) and through my local networks (Hamilton Administrators of Volunteers & Volunteer Hamilton) that we are consistently asked to offer input on topics of interest for professional development. Annual workplace feedback sessions or performance appraisals provide opportunities to reflect on our learning and development plans and interests for the year ahead. There is an abundance of educational opportunities and information sharing. National, provincial and local conferences, workshops, seminars, webinars, lunch and learns, field-related books, websites, discussion groups, blogs and other social media all offer access to many types of information and learning.

Another important area in the education and training realm that needs to be mentioned is the opportunity to earn professional certification. Certification is defined as "the act of making something official, the official approval to do something professionally or legally, the act of certifying" (www.merriam-webster.com).

In the past year and a half I have had a great opportunity to get involved with the certification committee and process for PAVR-O. There are many opinions on this topic and I have enjoyed numerous conversations with colleagues on the value of such a process and why an individual would consider certification. For some it appears to be a tough sell. Many reasons for this include a lack of time, no apparent benefits for advancing a career, little or no acknowledgement from the employer or the industry at large and a lack of monetary gain. Although these reasons are valid and understandable, it is my view that we must travel down this road and encourage more individuals to become certified professionals. Certification supports a stronger alignment with industry standards of practice and ultimately raises the bar for the profession so that it is seen as more than just a social networking opportunity and a nice warm fuzzy career choice.

Managers of volunteer resources are primarily employed within the charitable or nonprofit sector where merit increases do not exist as they do in the private sector. Although I do not believe this reason is always the key driver when an individual considers a certification designation, it may be a goal for some. As I reflect on the value of why an individual should consider a professional certification, I start to think about the great personal accomplishment of successfully passing an examination or writing a research paper. In simple terms, it feels awesome when you can check this off your "wish list" and feel that it was definitely worth the effort. Through a professional lens, certification brings an element of credibility to the individual and to their employer. It demonstrates a commitment to professional development and to continuous improvement in volunteer resources management.

In my opinion, certification provides some assurance that individuals working in our field will understand the gravity, the intricacy and the theory of how things should successfully work with volunteers if we want an efficient and effective volunteer program. Otherwise, it would be like slotting anyone into the roles we currently occupy and just letting them figure it out for themselves. Many of us may not only be able to imagine that possibility but know exactly what it looks like.

Although I feel we have a considerable way to go before an employer requires certification prior to hiring, it could be the deciding factor for a potential employee. It is a real possibility that a potential employer may lean towards hiring an individual who has achieved their professional certification. If you have yet to consider your Volunteer Resources Management Certification, I encourage you to do so. The personal and professional benefits that are experienced in the long term will have a positive effect and certainly contribute to the advancement of OUR profession!

Emanuela Gennaccaro Ducharme, CVRM, is a Volunteer Management Specialist for the Community Services Department, City of Hamilton, Chair of the PAVR-O Certification Committee and Past-President of the Hamilton Administrators of Volunteers.

REFLECTING ON "SALUTE TO THE PROFESSION" EVENT

by Mary Pam Vincer

As an experienced volunteer, but new to the field of volunteer management, I have to admit that I did not comprehend the degree of coordination and skill it takes to effectively orchestrate volunteer programs. As a young professional, the past two years have encapsulated a range of experiences from those ongoing "feel good" moments to those moments where one does not necessarily know how to handle a situation. Connecting with Volunteer Toronto has always been a starting point for me when facing a challenge. After registering for their "Salute to the Profession" session in October 2010, I was asked to write a reflective piece for this Journal. I was thrilled because this meant I had to make sure I attended during a busy time of year. More importantly, this meant I would learn about the training and professional development resources available for managers of volunteers.

> *As a "newbie" to the field, I periodically find myself wondering who my professional peers are.*

Initially, I was a little overwhelmed by the wealth of resources and career development opportunities available to managers of volunteers. This session provided an overview of the knowledge and skills required to be successful in this field and the variety of associations and training opportunities available. One major theme was the professionalization of the sector and standards of practice. Chris Peacock, a presenter from the Canadian Administrators of Volunteer Resources (CAVR), spoke about the standards of practice and the importance of the Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement and recommended that all managers of volunteers implement the code into their organizations. I will definitely take this piece away with me and encourage my human resource department to consider implementing the code into the organizational infrastructure.

As a "newbie" to the field, I periodically find myself wondering who my professional peers are. This is not always obvious working in the community-based, nonprofit sector. Participating in this session helped me to find my peers and I now know where to go to seek out further resources to assist in making my volunteer program successful. Across Canada there are hundreds of associations for volunteer administrators (AVAs) which managers of volunteer resources may join for a minimal fee. A speaker from Professional Administrators of Volunteer Resources – Ontario (PAVR-O) spoke about the benefits managers of volunteers can gain by joining these associations, such as standards of practice, advocacy and mentoring opportunities. I plan to join my local AVA to connect with peers, to learn from their experiences and to share mine.

It is important to always be updating one's professional skills. At a time with such an emphasis on credentials, I personally am at a phase in my career where I am looking to keep my resume competitive. Although many managers of volunteers may be limited by time or fiscal restrictions, this session highlighted a few ways to keep one's skills up-to-date while considering both of these challenges. For example, the Certified Volunteer Resource Manager (CVRM) certification offered by PAVR-O and the 13 online courses about the sector delivered by Charity Village sounded beneficial. A representative from Humber College spoke about their Management of Volunteers certificate program, which is the longest running program in Canada's voluntary sector. I am considering each of these options.

The underlying point I took away from this session was the importance of having competent and thoughtful managers of volunteers and volunteer programs. With volunteering being such a significant part of many Canadian lives, this is a signal to us in the field that there are a lot of opportunities for personal and sector growth and maturation. It is reassuring, as a young professional in this sector, that there are formalized programs and associations to join to enhance skills and provide further career development opportunities.

A native of Halifax, Mary Pam Vincer graduated from Dalhousie University and recently completed a Masters of Arts in Immigration and Settlement Studies at Ryerson University. While studying, she enjoyed her many volunteer roles with WUSC's Student Refugee Program. Currently, Mary Pam manages the Host program at COSTI Immigrant Services, Toronto and volunteers with Live Green Toronto.

RESOURCE REVIEW: LEADING THE WAY TO SUCCESSFUL VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT: PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR BUSY EXECUTIVES

by Ruth Vant

Leading the Way to Successful Volunteer Involvement: Practical Tools for Busy Executives
Betty B. Stallings, with Susan J. Ellis, 2010

Available at: http://www.energizeinc.com/store/1-221-E-1

There are many resources available to help managers of volunteers learn how to focus on issues surrounding volunteers – recruitment, engagement, recognition, policy development, screening, monitoring – the list is quite extensive. The resource that is most lacking is one written for organization executives – the executive directors or CEOs who are responsible, along with boards of directors, for setting the tone of an organization and carrying out its mandate. Betty Stallings' *Leading the Way to Successful Volunteer Involvement: Practical Tools for Busy Executives* fills this gap.

Susan Ellis originally undertook this challenge in *From the Top Down: The Executive Role in Volunteer Program Success* (1986, with updates in 1996 and 2010). *Leading the Way* was written as a complement to the 2010 update and there is a link to it at the beginning of each section. Since the 1980s and 1990s, there has been a shift in thinking from volunteer "programs" to teams of people working towards a mission. This shift is reflected on every page.

Leading the Way does not provide steps on how to manage volunteers, but concentrates instead on how an executive leader can effectively engage volunteers as partners to help carry out the organization's mission. *Section 1: Personal and Organizational Philosophy about Volunteering* asks thought-provoking questions about the executive's personal beliefs and philosophy about volunteering, which encourages the executive to buy into the concept of volunteer involvement. This crucial step helps set the tone for the organization; without it, the remaining steps cannot happen.

Nine more sections follow and build upon each other as the executive is guided through the process of effective volunteer involvement:
- planning
- budgeting and funding
- hiring and placing volunteer involvement staff
- creating a management team
- building staff commitment
- integrating volunteers throughout the organization
- the board's role
- legal compliance and risk management and
- monitoring and evaluation.

There is very little theory within the covers of this resource, but each section is laden with key concepts, idea stimulators, checklists and action steps. In addition, worksheets, examples and survey templates serve to help the executive engage others, both staff and volunteers. Every section ends with a checklist against which the executive can measure their own development in the area of volunteer engagement.

Many executives who already believe in and understand the mutual benefits of volunteer engagement will undoubtedly be drawn to this publication. And while they may not read it from cover to cover, they will probably utilize many of the resources it provides. But for those who still refer to "that program run by my manager of volunteers", this publication may need to be coaxed upon them by that manager. Regardless of how the executive ends up drawing upon this resource, they are sure to reap benefits.

It is a difficult task to write guidelines that are useful to organizations ranging from very small to quite large, but *Leading the Way* has succeeded in doing this. When one size does not fit all, then options are provided. Although the book is by an American

author, there are Canadian examples and resources, making it pertinent both north and south of the border.

Leading the Way is an excellent publication for executives of any organization that has volunteers. It focuses on the "why" and leaves the "how-to" to other resources intended for the director of volunteer involvement. It encourages the executive to ensure volunteers are a critical ingredient within their organization, from planning to execution.

Ruth Vant has several years' experience as both a Director of Volunteer Support and an Executive Director.

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
Editorial Process and Guidelines for Authors

Objective
The Canadian Journal of Volunteer Resources Management is intended:
1. to serve as a credible source of information on the management of volunteers in Canada;
2. to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and to encourage networking among managers of volunteers;
3. to provide a professional development tool for managers of volunteers;
4. to recognize and encourage Canadian talent in the field of management of volunteers;
5. to include in each issue at least two articles that will consider different views on a specific and predetermined theme.

Target Audience
The Journal's intended audience includes managers of volunteers, educators, media and funders of nonprofit organizations across the country.

Submissions
All manuscripts will be accepted on diskette or via e-mail in either Microsoft Word or Word Perfect. Submissions should be written according to "Canadian Style - A Guide to Writing and Editing" - Secretary of State, Dundurn Press. External reviewers may be engaged to review content if deemed advisable by the committee.

The revised draft is edited for clarity and consistency by the Editorial Team.

The edited version is returned to the author for acceptance along with an approval form for signature.

The signed form is to be returned to the Editorial Team within a week along with any suggestions for final revisions.

Format and Style
Authors are asked to respect the following word counts:

	Words	Pages
Lead Article	1000	5-6
Secondary Article	700-800	2-3
Book Review	150	1

The lead article will look at the topic in some depth and will normally require the author to conduct research into current trends and perspectives on the subject.

The secondary article will adopt a more practical approach, including personal experiences and opinions.

Advertising
Limited advertising space will be allowed in the Journal, for materials of direct relevance to managers of volunteers, and as long as it conforms to the guidelines set out by the Editorial Team.

Guidelines:
1. Only ¼ page and ½ page ads will be accepted.
2. Ad must be camera-ready.
3. A maximum of one page of ads will be permitted per issue.
4. Job ads are not recommended.
5. Cost is to be determined by the Editorial Team.